

BRITISH HIGH LIFE.

Edgar L. Wakeman's Wanderings Through Great Britain.

AMONG THE ENGLISH ARISTOCRACY.

Their Manner of Living in Town and Out—The London Season, Followed by the Country Rest—Etiquette of the Reception of Distinguished Guests—Sources of Amusement.

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LONDON, June 22.—English literature, or rather that portion comprised in English fiction, has certainly done injustice to British nobility in at least one respect. It has totally misrepresented all of us who are plebeian, and rather like remaining so, as to the every-day life of the British aristocracy.

Nobody loves this class. Nobody believes in its hereditary rights and privileges, save those clergy who hold "livings" under them and the other lackeys that serve them. Nobody has any manly sympathy whatever with its semi-legal pretensions and prerogatives. Nobody has the slightest confidence that a century hence any such class will continue to exist in Great Britain.

Your British lord really believed in himself. That is worth something to character, and builds up on the shelves of equable living and true dignity with anybody. Your American lord knows he is an accident, a pretender, an irritating social misfit. The former's real pleasures are found in relaxation from social duties which centuries of custom have rendered obligatory. The latter's pleasures are solely attainable through the arrogant and offensive insistence of endless recognition of his money power.

Many of the British nobility occupy their establishments the year round. These would scorn to do else. Their ethics are exclusively evolved from their fondest dreams to which they cling, that they are feudal lords. For such to reside in town would be to descend to the utter debasement of burghers.

In the main, the British castle life begins with the grouse shooting season in August, and lasts until the following May. With those "in the world" the period is much reduced. Many forsake the estates in February for the "first swim" in the metropolis. There is a delightful though quiet social period in London preceding Easter.

From this time late dinners and later balls follow in bewildering succession. The stifling air of Parliament and court is continually breathed. Fashionable event and affair, originated by the aristocracy, and to which the aristocracy are truly slaves, compel the limit of physical and financial endurance. Derby day, for which Parliament always adjourns, is followed by commencement at Eaton, and these by the great cricket matches between Lords and Commons.

There are many sources of amusement. There is certain to be one or more grand "meets," where the ladies join in the exciting hunt across country to the music of the yelping hounds.

Usually a large portion of the family plate, some pictures, and much bric-a-brac have done duty at the town-house, during the "season." Every other movable article of value has been left at the castle under the housekeeper's direct charge, and the general charge of the steward, agent or factor of the estate, who resides near. The housekeeper, and possibly a half-dozen under-servants have remained at the castle on "board wages," that is, reduced wages, and a certain weekly allowance with which to provide their own food.

After arrival, two or more weeks are devoted to absolute rest and quiet family reunion. This period is the children's heaven of the year. If they are young and the governess and the tutor (often the village curate) have had them in hand during their parents' absence in London, it is a season of genuine jollity and love-making between old and young.

But directly this is over. Milord and lady are slaves to a social system which demands nearly every moment of their lives. The remaining seven months of home life is a ceaseless round of entertainment of titled and other guests. The selection of these guests is of course occasionally with a view to, and in the anticipation of, pleasure to be obtained from congenial society.

The etiquette of the reception of guests is most simple. Indeed there is less formality shown in the actual relation of host to guest in a British nobleman's home than will be at any time contrived in the house of a Hoboken brewer or a Kansas City merchant in hogs. The first coachman, with the family closed carriage, if rainy, and with the wagonette, if in fine weather, brings the titled guests from the station, traps following after with the luggage; and the groom, with another carriage, attends to the guests' servants.

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Whatever number of guests may be found at any one time at these great establishments—and except on special occasions they will not exceed a dozen or twenty—in provision for the cuisine, in complete staffs of servants, and in the number of servants employed, they are at all times, during the occupancy of milord and milady, or either, as well prepared for entertainment of the highest as the least number.

The usual hours for meals are: breakfast at 9 to 10; luncheon at 2; tea at 5; dinner at 8; and supper at from 11 o'clock until midnight. Whether guests have arrived before luncheon or before dinner, etiquette requires that all shall gather in the drawing-room for introductions. This is absolutely the first and last of formality among these titled people during their sojourn.

There is probably no other place in the world where a guest for a week is so much the master of his own little own inclinations. Etiquette and form make no demands whatever upon you. You are as free to follow your own whims, either for rest or activity, as though quartered in a glen-side cabin. Remain up all night; sleep all day; never appear at a meals save the first luncheon or dinner; and there is none to question or criticize. The entire motif of the hospitality of the British nobility is, in short, the dignified but complete indulgence of the guest in rational activities, simple pleasures or complete rest.

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NEW MARTINSVILLE.

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The Fourth of July, our Independence day is here, and the question presents itself, will we orate, or will we irrigate? A good quality and quantity of early harvest apples have made their appearance in the market. They sell at fifteen cents a peck.

Captain Basil T. Bowers is in Middlebourne, Tyler county, attending to legal business preparatory to the August term of Circuit Court for that county. G. B. Barrett is lying here in the mouth of the creek with his paper queen. He recently purchased the old ferryboat at Marietta, O., which he is having rebuilt at this place. He will use it for towing his trading boat.

Mr. G. H. Bower, formerly a resident of Tyler county, near here, now of Oakland, California, is in from the "coast" visiting his relatives and friends in Tyler and Wetzel counties. He left here about five years ago, and has been very prosperous in his new home.

There are not as many venomous snakes in the country districts as there were formerly. During the hot season of the year copperhead and rattlesnakes leave the high grounds and take up their habitation in the valleys along water courses. At the time of the great flood in Big Fishing creek in August, 1875, a great many of these venomous snakes were seen passing down the stream on the drift.

Some eight months ago a Mr. Charles Murray came to New Martinsville. He claimed the State of Maine as his home and said he had been engaged in teaching on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and in Accomack and Northampton counties in Virginia. He was of good address and education, and taken together was a genial, affable man, in consequence of which he soon had quite a circle of friends.

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